

Van Cortlandt Track Club newsletter

Philadelphia Flyer

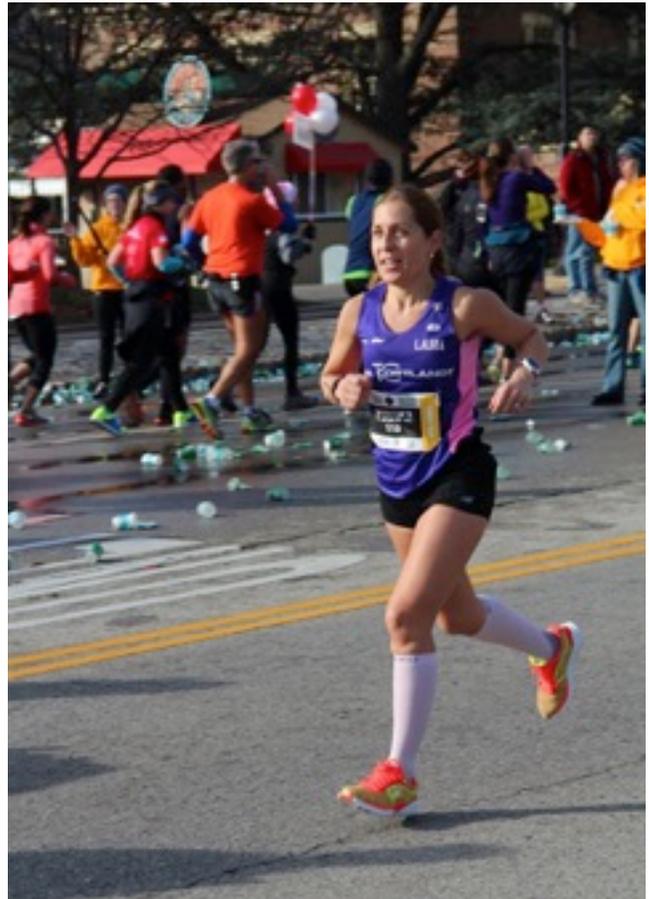
Laura Rodriguez runs a near-perfect race in the Philadelphia Marathon, breaking the VCTC women's marathon record as well as the magical three-hour barrier

On a cool, crisp, November 23rd morning, thousands of runners set out on a 26.2 mile journey called the Philadelphia Marathon. Among them was Van Cortlandt Track Club's Laura Rodriguez, on a mission to make history or bust. What followed was a lesson in loyalty and steadfast consistency.

An Olympic Decathlon Champion once said when asked how he trained for his event, that he had ten girlfriends, all of whom he had to be loyal to. So to steal from that analogy, Laura had 26.2 boyfriends that day (in addition to Roly), and she too needed to give each one the same attention and effort. Laura did just that, running negative splits, which is the perfect execution of theoretical marathon strategy.

Laura's race was a beautiful display of: 6:40, 6:40, 6:40...etc, etc...for each successive mile, which put her on target for her goal of breaking 3 hours. But that is just the "tip of the iceberg" in Laura's story. The secret of her success was a months-long training program thought up by coaches Ken Rolston and Ernie Rivas that prepared her for her test of endurance.

Neither super-athlete nor sedentary person can truly appreciate what training for a marathon entails (especially running mostly alone) until he/she has gone through it. On page 2 is Laura's story in her own words; on page 4 is her final-six-weeks training program.



Laura making her 2:58:17 club record look easy

The Comeback Kid

by Laura Rodriguez

I would like to start this story from the beginning, relating how coach Ken introduced me to his great friend Ernie Rivas. I had just run the Boston Marathon and was thinking of what a horrible winter it was, not that I was making excuses. But this year I knew that it didn't matter what time I ran in Boston. What did matter was returning and running. I just wanted to soak it all in. And it *was* a great race.

But I knew in my heart that I needed to step it up and feel that passion again. That's when we started talking about my goals and what I wanted to do. I had registered for Philadelphia because I am a huge *Rocky* fan and thought that it would be great to run up the steps to that museum. When I registered for Philly, I printed these numbers: 2:59:59 and that would be posted by my desk at work.

Coaches Ernie and Ken came up with a great training plan that would start me with a base and I would build from there. I was excited and scared; I had never done high mileage training before and this was all new to me.

My highest training week was 86 miles. But I ran a lot of those miles slowly. I would average about 9:10 to 9:20 pace on those daily 10 to 12 milers. I learned that running fast all the time doesn't make you fast. This is what worked for me. Running those miles slow helped me to recover and still get in the distance.

I have to share my favorite workout, which was called the Marathon simulation. I did it on October 25, and was lucky that I had great weather for it. I prepared as I would for race day; I had my *UCAN* 20 minutes before and had my bagel with peanut butter.

The workout consisted of one hour at 6:45 pace, then the second hour 6:30 to 6:40 pace.

I nailed the first hour and felt really strong. When it came to the second hour I had (husband)Roly come out on his bike so I could have some company and Gatorade. I ran every single mile faster than 6:30. This workout gave me the confidence I needed. And coaches Ernie and Ken were so proud. I knew that if they believed in me, it was about time I started believing in myself.

I gave it all I had in every single workout and had many friends along the way help me, whether it was a tempo or a long run. I always knew I would be sharing some miles with my VCTC teammates. I would start

my runs on the flats before the team run on Saturday and couldn't wait to see everybody, always cheering me on and encouraging me. All along I had two amazing coaches that were so synchronized that sometimes I would feel they were in my head.

But let's get to race week. I want to share my taper week, that was hard, really hard. I was so ready that I became an emotional wreck. I would go to sleep dreaming of that finish line. I was a sappy mess. I think what made me more emotional was the work I had put in. Sometimes I just couldn't believe it and I didn't want it to end. Let's just say I cried to a lot of *Rocky* movies that week.. I left *Rocky 6* for the end and I'm glad I did. It was a *Rocky* comeback. That's how I felt. I wanted that 2:59:59. And was not going to go down without a fight.

Now let's talk about that Sunday fight that would start at 7am. The race morning was very different from others Matt Soja would tell me he saw it in my eyes. I was focused and ready. I am not going to lie; I was nervous but just thinking of the training put me at ease. I couldn't believe I was standing behind these elite women and then I remembered how elite I felt during my training. Jill Staats made me feel special every time she called me "elite". I had my confidence back and was happy to put it all out (continued page 3)

(Rodriguez continued) there on that course. My plan, of course was to run negative splits(run the second half of the race faster than the first). For the first half of the race, Bobby Asher paced with me. I felt like that first half went by so quickly. And I also remember cursing at the hills: flat course my butt. But we got it done. For the second half, Marcos Duarte would be waiting for me. I still felt super strong until mile 18. That's when I was cursing at the hills again. But Marcos made sure I stayed at around 6:40 pace. I couldn't wait to get to mile 20: those are what I call my special miles. I dedicated them to the special people in my life. And it has always worked to get me through. I also had a beautiful pin attached to my singlet from my amazing friend Tanya. It was a gift from her mom who had passed away. A couple of times I touched it for strength.

Toward the end of the race, my mind started to play tricks on me. I kept looking at my Garmin watch. I remember at mile 24 my legs wanted to give in. But Marcos would tell me that we had to go. I had no choice: I had to do it. Passing my friends and Roly at around mile 25 made me kick it into gear and just give it all I had left in my legs. There was no way I was letting this dream slip from my hands. I focused and went for it. As I crossed the finish line the clock read 2:58:20.

I did it, I did it !! Those were the only words that came out of my mouth. I cried and just wanted to hug everyone around me. The love I received from everybody was so overwhelming. There was one last thing I had to do and that was run up those museum steps from the movie *Rocky*. So we walked and walked until I made it to the steps. I felt no pain; all I felt was pure joy and accomplishment.

And that's it. This was my comeback. My legs are running along to the beat of my heart again. And I have a team that helped me along the way. This will be something I will cherish for as long as I live. #

Philadelphia Marathon

by Ariel Cruz

It's been a year long journey to get to this point. If you would have asked me last year after NYC Marathon if I would run a sub-4 marathon I would have said "Yeah, maybe in 2 years". But with focus, determination, and discipline it became possible. Did I do it on my own? Heck no! It was a mixture of ingredients and components that made this recipe for success possible. I will not vacillate in thanking two people

in particular, Coach Ken and Rachel Gissinger. They have been guiding me throughout my training and helping me stay focused. Coach Ken, simply put, gave me the advice and encouragement I needed to hear along the way. Rachel, she stuck by my side on the track, on Thursday morning runs and has been a great friend during my training. I was very happy to have concluded my training with her on our weekly Thursday morning run. Although I had the overwhelming support of my teammates, I owe Ken and Rachel special thanks.

Now, the power of prayer is an incredible thing. From the moment when the thought first popped into my head, I started to pray. Prayed that one person in particular would come down and be there at the finish line. I got a whole lot more than that! Rachel Gissinger arriving at dinner the night before the marathon and meeting me along the course when I needed someone the most was a victory in itself! The medal when I finished was just a bonus. I owe her so much!! She was exactly what I needed when I needed it. The way she helped pushed me through those last miles made the difference between a 4+hr marathon and a sub-4hr marathon finish. During dinner, we discussed where she would meet me to run me in. She spotted me first as I

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Laura's marathon training program

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 9 - October 6 - 12 Weekly Total: About 70 - 80 miles Recovery week No tempo at all.	6 - 8 miles very easy Recovery	6 - 8 miles very easy Recovery	8 - 10 easy miles Recovery	10 - 12 easy miles	10 - 12 easy miles	4 to 6 miles easy @ 9 min pace	18 - 22 miles easy
Week 10 - October 13 - 19 Weekly Total: About 75 - 85 miles Tempo run this Thursday Focus on pacing a marathon under 3 hours	6 - 8 miles easy	10 - 12 miles easy	10 - 12 miles easy	10 - 12 miles easy	10 - 12 miles easy	Marathon Tempo Warm up 5 - 10 minutes easy 90 minute tempo run (practice holding 6:45 mile pace) Warm down 5 minutes	17 miles easy
Week 11 October 20 - 26 Weekly Total: About 75 - 85 miles	6 to 10 miles easy @ 9 min pace	Track Intervals 2 mile warm up 6 to 8 - 800 m (avg 3:00 to 3:05 per) 2 mile warm down	8 to 10 miles easy @ 9 min pace	10 to 12 miles easy @ 8 min pace	10 to 12 miles easy @ 9 min pace	Marathon Simulation 2 hour Tempo 1 st hour @ 6:45 - 6:50 pace Then shift into a higher gear 2 nd hour @ 6:35 - 6:40	1 to 2.5 hour very easy recovery run @ 9 min pace
Week 12 October 27 - Nov. 2 Weekly Total: About 75 - 85 miles	8 - 10 miles @ 9 min pace	10 - 12 miles @ 9 min pace	10 miles @ 7:30 to 8 min pace	10 - 12 miles @ 9 min pace	8 - 10 miles @ 9 min pace	12 - 15 miles @ 8 to 8:30 pace	18 - 20 miles @ 8 to 8:30 pace
Week 13 November 2 - 9 Weekly Total: About 75 - 85 miles	6 to 8 miles easy @ 9 min pace	Track Intervals 2 mile warm up 5 - 1000 m (avg 3:40 to 3:45 per) 2 minute slow jog recovery between each 2 mile warm down	8 to 10 miles easy @ 9 min pace	10 - 12 miles @ 9 min pace	10 - 12 miles @ 9 min pace	Marathon Simulation 1 mile warm-up slow 10 miles @ 6:30 to 6:45 (control the effort - don't go all out) 1 mile cool down slow	18 - 20 miles @ 8 minute pace
Week 14 November 10 - 16 Weekly Total: tbd	6 miles easy @ 9 min pace	Track Intervals 2 mile warm up 12 X 400 m (avg 90 sec per with a very slow 200m jog between each) 2 mile warm down	4 miles easy @ 9 min pace	Tempo easy mile warm up then 10 miles @ 7 to 7:30 min pace	4 miles easy @ 9 min pace	15 miles @ 8 minute pace	10 miles easy @ 8 min pace
Week 15 November 17 - 23 Weekly Total: tbd							Race Day

Van Cortlandt Track Club 2014 Board of Directors

President: Bette Clark
Secretary: Bobby Asher

Vice President:
Treasurer: Hiroshi Kitada, Ass't: Jill Staats

2014 Executive Committee

Social Cmte: Maryann Khinda
Finance: Hiroshi Kitada
UEC Co-Directors: Hiroshi Kitada, Maureen Burke
B'Ramble Co-Directors: Bette Clark, Dave King
Social Media: Mandi Susman
Communications Cmte: Hiroshi Kitada
Newsletter: Dave King

Clothing: Rachel Isaac, David Isaac
Volunteer Coordinator: Hiroshi Kitada
Summer Series Co-Directors: James Moloney,
Bobby Asher
Publicity and Marketing: Liam Moroney
Website: Maryann Khinda, Kevin Shelton-Smith,
Rachel Kimber, Beni Veraz, Leo Vando, Andrea
Rafael

Athletic Director: Ken Rolston Ass't: Glen Shane

All Members Please Read:

2014 Awards Dinner

When: **Saturday, January 17th, 2015, 6:00 -11:00 PM**

Where: **Gaelic Park Catering Hall**, 4000 Corlear Avenue, Bronx, NY 1046.

Directions available at: <http://www.gaelicparkcatering.com/Contact-Us.html>

Cost: In advance - **\$45**/members paid up in 2014; **\$60**/guests and unpaid members.

Since this is an adult occasion and not a family party, we do not recommend bringing young children, but if you feel you have to, the charge is \$30 per child.

This price has been subsidized by the club; full cost per person is **over \$65**.

Please go to the website to buy your tickets: <http://www.vctc.org/group/membersonly/page/2014-awards-dinner>

To attend the Awards Dinner, you must be a VCTC member in good standing to receive the discounted member price for the dinner.

Membership Dues:

Junior/Senior membership \$10, \$25 Single membership, \$35 Family membership, \$500 Lifetime membership.

If you are paying with a check, please e-mail first: vctconline@gmail.com

Then send a check payable to **VCTC** for dinner and membership to: VCTC, P.O. Box 341 Bronx, NY 10471.

Questions on the Dinner?

Please call or email Maryann Khinda-Lombardo:
917-683-7709, mtkhinda@aol.com

Questions on Membership?

Please email David King: kingkvd@optonline.net or Rick Bloomer: rick.vctc@gmail.com

Important Information for Club Members about the upcoming Annual Membership Meeting, Executive Committees, and Election for Board of Directors

The Van Cortlandt Track Club Annual Membership Meeting is **Saturday, December 6 at 10:30AM - 12:30PM** in **Room 236, Leo Engineering Building, Manhattan College.**

Thank you for being a part of VCTC! We want to encourage you to come to our Annual meeting. This is an important meeting where we review the year and make plans for the next, with the hope that many of you will join a committee to get more involved in club activities. In this meeting, we describe the different club functions and encourage all of you to take on new roles. These are described in detail, below. So please read about the behind-the-scenes activities, consider what you might like to do (or come up with new ideas for volunteering for VCTC), and mark your calendars for **Saturday, December 6.**

Also, please come to the meeting wearing club clothing so we can take a new club photo that includes all of you. We will have some club clothing available for sale that day. Remember to bring your check books (or pay online) to renew your membership for 2015 and reserve your place for our **Awards Dinner on Saturday, January 17 at Gaelic Park.**

Agenda to be covered (full agendas will be available):

- Nominations for Annual Election 2015
- Election Proceedings
- Review of executive committee activities 2014
- Call for volunteers for executive committees 2015 and more
- Club Clothing Sale
- Awards Dinner
- Other announcements

Annual Election 2015

In preparation for the upcoming annual meeting, we have compiled a list of executive committee positions and descriptions of their responsibilities so that you can think about ways you would like to be involved in club activities in the upcoming year. If you are unable to attend but would like to head or take part in a committee, please notify a current Board member.

Chairs, co-chairs, and active members of these committees will be considered members of the club's executive committee and will be eligible to run for the VCTC Board of Directors after one year of service.

In addition to committee assignments, nominations will be taken at our meeting for three Board positions for the upcoming year, currently occupied by Bette Clark (President), Jill Staats (Vice President), and Hiroshi Kitada (Treasurer). Board positions are for a two-year, renewable term. Once someone is voted on to the Board, the specific position to be occupied will be determined by Board consensus, as per By-Law (re-revised). The duties of these positions will be made available prior to the election.

Board of Directors:

Bette Clark, <i>President</i>	Hiroshi Kitada, <i>Treasurer</i>
Jill Staats, <i>Vice President</i>	Rick Bloomer, <i>Vice Treasurer</i>
Bobby Asher, <i>Secretary</i>	

Nomination for Annual Election 2015

The following people are eligible for nominations to the Board by virtue of serving at least one year on the executive committee. This is not an exhaustive list: if you think someone may be eligible due to past service, please let us know.

Maureen Burke	Hiroshi Kitada
Bette Clark	James Maloney
Ariel Cruz	Ken Rolston
Garland Days	Glen Shane
Stephany Evans	Kevin Shelton-Smith
Arnie Gore	Matt Soja
David Isaac	Jill Staats
Rachel Isaac	Mandi Susman
Maryann Khinda	Beni Veraz

If you would like to nominate any of these eligible candidates for a Board position, please send your nomination(s) to a member of our nominating committee, Ken Rolston (krolston@aol.com) or Bobby Asher (asher243@gmail.com). Nominations can also be made in person at our December 6 Annual Membership Meeting. Nominees will have one week following the Awards Dinner to accept or reject their nomination.

Based on accepted nominations, an election will take place at the Awards Dinner on Saturday, January 17, by paper ballot. Those not attending the dinner will have an opportunity to vote electronically or by paper ballot in the week following the Awards dinner. The election will be managed by our election committee, Gene Westling and Dominic Lombardo, who will announce the results by the end of January. Please remember that you must be a paid-up member to be eligible to vote. Individual members are entitled to one vote, family members are entitled to two.

Executive Committees

Here is a list of current club positions and the names of those occupying them this year, followed by job descriptions. Heads of committees are approved by the Board in February for the calendar year. Current committee heads and members can continue in their roles for additional years, subject to approval. We encourage people to consider joining or heading one of these committees in the new year.

Permanent Committees as per bylaws:

Social: Maryann Khinda

Communications: Kevin Shelton-Smith

Subcommittees:

Website: Mandi Susman, Beni Veraz

Social Media: Mandi Susman, Ariel Cruz

Publicity and Marketing:

Newsletter: Dave King

Athletic: Head Coach: Ken Rolston, **Asst. Coach:** Glen Shane, **Team Captain:** Bobby Asher, **Age Group Team Captains:** Laura Rodriguez (W open), Matt Soja (M open), Mandi Susman (W 40's), Garland Days (M 40's), Stephany Evans (W 50's), Kevin Shelton-Smith (M 50s), Jill Staats (W 60s), Ken Rolston (M 60s), Arnie Gore (M & W 70s); **Race Time Keeper:** Peter Coy

Membership: Dave King and Rick Bloomer

Clothing: David Isaac and Rachel Isaac

Finance: Hiroshi Kitada

Race Directors:
Urban Environmental Challenge (UEC): Maureen Burke
Summer Series: James Moloney (assisted by Bobby Asher);
5k Cancer Challenge: Glen Shane;
B'Ramble: Bette Clark and Bobby Asher

Other Club Position:
Volunteer Coordinator: Hiroshi Kitada

Club Records and PR Keeper: Kevin Shelton-Smith

Committee Descriptions:

Athletic Committee

The athletic committee currently comprises the Coach and Assistant Coach who oversee the club's training and development and the Team

Captain who works with each of the age-group team captains to plan for the NYRR Club Points Series and oversees overall team development.

Membership Committee

The membership committee is responsible to the club president for:

- Maintaining accurate records of members' names, addresses and contact details
- Reminding members to consider renewing their membership annually
- Providing updated lists of member details and related stats to club officials as required
- Providing lists of members in birthday and age order for the President & Team Captains respectively
- Producing a Directory of members for all members at least annually
- Maintaining and updating membership related pages on the club website
- Encouraging members to sign up to club emails to ease communication
- Advising new and prospective members of club benefits and activities

Clothing Committee

The clothing committee is responsible for the design, production, storage, and distribution of all club apparel. Clothing committee members should be prepared to oversee team singlets, jackets, and T-shirts, as well as holiday giveaways, race shirts (at the request of and in cooperation with race directors), and additional requests made by the board of directors. This

committee is in need of additional help in distributing club clothing.

Communications Committee:

- Promote and Distribute info on VCTC races and events
- Outreach to all VCTC team members via one method or another
- Decide and execute strategies and organize information distribution
- Review club announcement on www.vctc.org website, via e-mail and other means and send for the board approval.
- Disseminate club announcement to club members, e-mail subscribers upon the board approval

Subcommittees:

Website and Social Media:

the website committee is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of the www.vctc.org site, Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/VanCortlandtTC/>, and the Twitter account <http://twitter.com/#!/VanCortlandtTC>.

Website – keep information current on the webpage and approve new member requests

Calendar/Race Registration/
Race Results/Archival/
Newsletter/Photo

Social Media –

Support the marketing team and gatekeeping FB and Twitter

Marketing and Publicity (*public relations and media coordination*)

Promote races and events by creating and distributing information, publicize club races through email, flyer/postcard distribution at other area races, and media solicitation. attracting media to club events and answering media enquiries, develop a local media list, invite those individuals to all club events (including social events, as appropriate), and work with them to develop interesting stories about the club and its runners.

Finance Committee

The finance committee is led by the club's treasurer. It is responsible for the care and custody of all monies belonging to the organization, for reporting on the club's finances to state and federal governing bodies, and for the long-term financial health of the club. The finance committee include the club's comptrollers Mike and Pat Hudick who manage our year end finances.

Social Committee

The social committee is responsible for organizing and implementing the annual VCTC Awards dinner (selecting venue, menu, etc.) end-of-summer series BBQ, fall picnic, and other club social functions.

Other club positions:

Volunteer Coordinator:

Recruits and organizes volunteers for VCTC races, NYRR races, and community events, as needed, including trail maintenance in Van Cortlandt Park.

Club Records and PR Keeper:

Keeps track of newly set records

and PR's and updates documents, as needed.

Suggestions for other roles are always welcome!

Looking forward to seeing you on December 6!

(Cruz continued from page 3) approached somewhere between mile 22 & 23 and got in position. When I saw her, I suddenly got a bolt of energy. Once by my side, I was transported to our runs on the flats on Thursday. My pace suddenly picked up but my body said hold on there. I had to conserve energy for the last few miles. While the entire marathon was a great experience, nothing tops those last miles with Rachel. She helped me maintain a controlled pace as I approached the finish line. Even as my legs would begin to cramp up and I needed to slow it down, she supported me. Infinite thanks to you Rachel (FD!).

How did the race go? Well, there was a crowded start and an emotional finish. The course despite what people say was challenging. It's a marathon! No matter what the course (flat or hilly) it's 26.2 miles! The morning of the race, we all met at Bobby Asher's hotel lobby before heading to baggage check and corrals. After a long walk and weaving around the huge lines being formed by the porta-johns, I finally dropped off my bag and started doing a light

warm-up before entering my corral. Once inside the corral, it was just a matter of waiting. As the 7am start time approached people started peeling away clothing, heat sheets, hats, and whatever they had on to keep them warm. Then we were off! I remember passing the Embassy Suites hotel and looking around to see if Maryann and Rachel were outside waiting to cheer but I saw no purple. The first couple of miles were relatively flat and crowded. With sections of the road closed off due to construction, it became more of an obstacle course. I found myself weaving too much early on to try to keep up with my pace group. People began running on the sidewalks trying to not get blocked in. I remained focused and occasionally looked around to take in the sites but not too much. The crowds were great and you could feel the energy as you ran through certain parts of the course. I definitely felt the energy as we ran through University City. The college kids were out cheering and the beer stations were very tempting. We were blessed also with great weather. My favorite part was running along the Schuylkill River and Fairmount Park towards the second half of the marathon. Then there were some very desolate areas where it was just you and your thoughts. This is where you had to be tough mentally and dig

deep to not let the silence overwhelm you. Will I dissect my run at some point and see what I could have done differently? Definitely! Will I do it anytime soon? Not a chance! I want to enjoy this moment for as long as I can and when I am ready, I will prepare for next race. 2014 has been an amazing year for me. Complete contrast to what 2013 was and I owe it to having a different outlook on life. I owe it to the amazing people that I have grown close to. I realized that doing what makes you happy and surrounding yourself with positive people has an overwhelming effect on your well-being. This team is filled

with amazing people that encourage and support one and other to not just improve as runners but as people in general. I am again and will always be glad I joined this team.

Now rewind back to March of this year. I was in Spain, ready to run the rock n roll Madrid marathon. It was to be my redemption marathon. I was going to erase the awful performance from NYC Marathon with a great finish time. Was it great? Not even close. Was it an improvement? A 22 min PR was a huge improvement but still not a sub-4 hr marathon. Once I got over that marathon, I switched focus to prepare for my fall marathon,

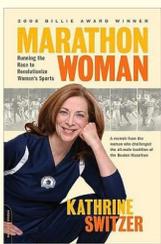
Philadelphia. This meant staying healthy, injury free, improving overall strength and getting down to goal weight. Race after race, I slowly started to see improvements. PR after PR, my confidence level grew to a point where I could say, sub 4hr marathon is very possible. Then Wineglass Half marathon came, the race that showed me what I am capable of and how much I can endure. It was an amazing experience. I was able to finish in 1hr 40min at an average 7:33m/m pace, a 10min PR from my previous Brooklyn half marathon.

Jump forward to the week (continued next page)

Inspiring Reads for Runners

Kick Off Your Trainers and Enjoy!

Kathrine Switzer



Inspiring story of the woman who broke through gender barriers to get the women's marathon into the Olympic games.



Easy to follow running and walking programs from beginner to advanced.

<http://kathrineswitzer.com>

Chris Cooper



In this inspirational collection, 50 runners, from Olympians and World Champions, to courageous disabled athletes and middle-of-the-packers, share their personal accounts of what they consider the best race they ever ran...and why.



Learn about must-run places, can't miss races, and get tips, tricks, and words of encouragement and advice from some of the top runners today.

<http://www.ccooper.typepad.com>

Pam Reed



The story of the woman who shocked the running world when she won the sport's most grueling race—the Badwater Ultramarathon.

<http://www.pamreed2013.com>

Ed Ayres



One of America's most experienced runners meditates on how the skills and mindset needed to complete an ultramarathon are also essential to endure as humans.

www.ed-ayres.com

before Philly Marathon. My training had been very good and I was ready for tapering. I had some tough grueling workouts leading up to taper week, including one wet and windy tempo run with Laura. We hung in there for 18 tough miles. The nerves started to build as race day approached. I couldn't think of anything else except the marathon. Mentally and physically I was stronger than ever. I had followed a training plan that included weekly deep tissue massages on Mondays after tough weekend workouts. Sinead made sure my muscles were in tip top shape. Look forward to cheering for her when she runs Boston next year. I also would do an "ice bath" after every workout for speedier recovery. Then there was the swimming. My one piece of cross training that had helped me improve physically. I saw considerable improvement in my breathing and overall fitness. I was in the best shape I had ever been. Race day, my plan was to run with the 3:45 pace group for the first half and assess how I felt. Yeah I could say that the course was crowded. I could say that it was hard for me keep up with the pacer. Yeah, I took a wrong turn and almost finished the half marathon course instead, but in the end it was about execution. I didn't run my race. Was my goal

ambitious? A 41 minute PR, yeah I would say that's ambitious. Still, did I cross that finish line with a smile on my face? Heck yeah!! Will I beat myself in the head for slowing down and going off pace and not finishing with 3:45 pace group? Heck no!! I couldn't have asked for a better race weekend. It was perfect from start to finish. In hindsight, I could have probably done a few things better but this will not be my last marathon. I will take from this one hard learned lesson and better prepare for the next one.#

Coaches' Corner

by Ken Rolston

Upcoming Races:

* = NYRR points race

Dec 6- Sat- 9:30- Jingle Bell Jog
4m, Prospect Park

Dec 7- Sun- 10 Am- Couples
Relay 3 x 2 Blue Mountain

Dec 13-Sat- 8:30- Ted Corbitt
15K- Central Park *-

Dec 21-Sun- 9:30- Roosevelt
Island 5K-10K

Dec 31- Wed- 11:59- Midnight
Run- Central Park

Jan 10- Sat- 8 AM- Joe
Kleinerman 10K

Jan 15- Thu- 7 PM- Thursday
Night at the Races 1- Armory

Jan 25- Sun- 8 AM- Fred Lebow
½ marathon

Jan 29- Thu- 7 PM- Thursday
Night at the Races 2- Armory
Feb 1- Sun- 9 AM- Gridiron
4m- Central Park

Greetings all ! We've just come through an amazing stretch of long distance racing highlighted by the 70 + runners in the NY Marathon and close the season with the final club points race, the Ted Corbitt 15K in Central Park.

Current standings point to another great season for VCTC !
Open- Men 8th, Women 6th
40 + Men 5th, Women 12th
50 + Men 3rd, Women 5th
60 + Men 5th, Women 1st.
Our Women's 60 + team has clinched first place !! Men's 50 + has a chance for a podium finish.

Tuesday track workouts will continue through December and then we will move to the hills from January through March. Looking forward to preparing for some indoor races and relays along with digit-numbing outdoor races in the winter season !#

To all members:

Please send all
2014 race results
to:
krolston@aol.com

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How Coaching Moms In Training Improved My Running

by Mandi Susman

Some may think this is a bold, and self-serving title, but it's true. This past year I have had the honor and privilege of coaching two seasons for Moms in Training, a fundraising team that raises money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, while helping moms get in shape (some for the first times in their lives), or back in shape after having their babies. It's been incredibly rewarding to see

the moms go from not ever having run at all (some of them, anyway) to being able to finish a 10K or 4-mile race in Central Park. It's also rewarding to be a cog in the wheel that is rolling towards a world with no cancer.

As amazing as these outcomes are, I expected to be proud of the moms' progress and to be a part of a great cancer research organization. What I didn't expect was how being a coach improved my running results. This year I've been able to set PRs in the mile, 5 mile, 10K and half marathon and while I've worked hard and trained more for each race than I have in the past, it was the mental

training that I think made the most difference.

Working with moms who are brand new to running made me look differently at what I do and how I do it. I suddenly had a team that looked up to me but I also had a different reason to run. We are fighting cancer and helping moms get in shape so they can be better moms and live long and healthy lives. But we also had to help the moms train their brains, too. Bette Clark and I spent a fair amount of time running with the moms and helping them through the mental struggle as well as the physical.

(continued next page)

Helping others work through their mental game was such a help for my own mental game. Being able to show the moms that they could run continuously for more than 40 minutes and then still have a bit of a kick at the end helped them to realize that they are much stronger than they previously thought. It also made me think more about my training and how hard I've worked so when I started to lose steam during my most recent half marathon, I remembered all the training runs I had done, all the tempos and intervals I completed and I also remembered all those who can't and never will be able to run.

I discovered one other mental trick that I think made a huge difference for me. While I sent good thoughts to those battling cancer, I also sent positive vibes toward something more positive. I used a portion of my run, the toughest miles, eight, nine and 10, to think about Dom Lombardo and Maryann Khinda and project a long and happy marriage for them. While I didn't think they were in need of my thoughts, I couldn't help thinking about Maryann because the last time I ran that course was the Wineglass full marathon the previous year with Maryann which ended with Dom's proposal. We had such a tough race, it was so hot and we both crashed and burned late in the race. When I got to the part of the course where I honestly wasn't sure if I could actually finish the marathon the previous year, I was feeling great, so I focused on that positivity. Focusing on the positive rather than the negative I think made a huge difference in my performance late in the race. My splits were really consistent: I hit my pace from the beginning and maintained race pace fairly consistently all the way through to the finish line. The miles that I usually "hit the wall" were not really any slower than the first few miles and looking back that was a performance I know I will be proud of for years to come.



Bette Clark(2nd left) and Mandi(2nd right) with the Moms In Training

Looking at something from a different perspective is a valuable lesson in just about any area of life and that's just another reason running is an excellent metaphor for life and another way running helps in all aspects of life (except maybe keeping the laundry under control...).

For more information on Moms In Training, feel free to speak with either Bette or me or visit the website: <http://www.teamintraining.org/nyc/moms>.

New York City Marathon Race Report::

Monica's NYCM

by Monica Harrington

It is race day. I have lain awake half the night listening to the wind bellow at the trees and willing it to subside by morning. (It has not.) I have taken a bus from the top of the city to the bottom, the air inside so warm and damp it has steamed up the windows so that we seem to be traveling in a cloud. Alison Whitehead has given me a fuzzy blue wristband with a smiley face on it, a reminder to run happy. I have tumbled out of the cloud-bus into the sharp, cold

landscape of Fort Wadsworth. The start village feels like a purgatory; thousands of lost souls waiting. It is race day.

Teammates and friends form a hobo tribe on the curb in front of the Orange Village. We are excited, anxious, silly. We are cold. We share hand warmers and sarcastic comments about our throw-away clothes: I tell Tim Guscott he looks like a muppet, and David Isaac tells me the pants I'm wearing are the ugliest he's ever seen. Announcements from the loudspeakers eddy above our heads and bob away on the wind. We send the wave 1 runners off to their corrals with hugs and well-wishes. Cannons signal the start of wave 1—boom! boom!—and runners begin to flow across the bridge, a neon river. I realize it's corral time for wave 2, and with more hugs and well-wishes, Alix Cotumaccio and I make our way to our corrals, shed layers as we go. The muddy ground sports a cover of straw but is still slippery.

Wave 2 runners begin moving toward the start. I follow along, listen to snippets of chatter among other runners, watch their faces and my footing. As I approach the Verrazano Bridge, the cannons fire again—boom! boom!—the double-bass sends a jolt ricocheting between my heart and my (cold) toes. I can't stifle my laughter as "New York, New York" tickles my ears, giddy that this moment has finally arrived.

I cross the starting mat and enter another dimension. Running over the bridge is an out-of-body experience. The winds pummel me, the span rumbles with thousands of footfalls, the NYC skyline glints to my left. It seems impossibly far away. I realize I cannot even see the part of the city I will run to. This line of thinking is counterproductive so I abandon it. Someone's pink and orange Dunkin Donuts hat flies across my face, tossed by its wearer or stolen by the swirling wind. I am glad it is soft and doesn't have buttons or a zipper. A discarded heat sheet wraps around



my right ankle. The wind has its way with all of us; we sway and stagger like newborn calves. I lift my right foot, the wind blows it sideways and I kick my left ankle. Repeatedly. I am surprised to discover that I am utterly calm inside. Perhaps overwhelmed by the surrounding chaos, I let it all stream past me. I decide this is good.

Clear-headed, I leave the tornadic bridge for the solid ground of Brooklyn. One bridge done, one borough done. Check. A drum corps greets me from a gas station on the other side of 4th Avenue, and I pick

up that rhythm. I check my Garmin often. *No 8s*, I remind myself silently to keep my target pace. Brooklyn is in full swing. The energy is amazing. I feel light and easy. *Good*, I congratulate myself. Measures of different music wash back and forth like waves. People line the sidewalk. Faces mostly coalesce into a tapestry, but some are framed in the foreground. Police officers stand by, relaxed and congenial. Firefighters in full gear look on, bemused. A lady ahead stops to snap a selfie with one of the more toothsome young men.

I approach 11th Street, the first of three spots where I expect to see my family. I move to my left, seek their faces in the crowd. Spectators see me searching, extend high-fives, encouragement. *Who are these people?* I marvel at the wealth of goodwill offered so freely. I pass 11th Street, 9th Street, Union Street without spotting familiar faces. Disappointment. I will have to make it to 110th Street, the next of my family zones, on my own. I need a boost. I am ready to ditch my last extra layer, a long-sleeve t-shirt, and decide to tear it off Hulk-a-Mania style to amuse myself. I rip it down the front but the hem refuses to give. *Drat!* I laugh anyway. A guy running near me wonders, “Did you really just rip your shirt off?” I confirm, and he laughs too. *Good*, I congratulate myself again. I make a mental note to cut the hem next time.

At a turn in downtown Brooklyn, someone calls my name. I just glimpse my mom and my sister on the far left. Guess they ran out of time to get farther south. I wave to them and take heart. Throughout Brooklyn, the party rages on. Dancing on the sidewalk, cheering from stoops and windows, sloshing red Solo cups on rooftops. A school band plays. A gospel choir sings from the steps of a church, and it becomes my most favorite thing that has ever happened. I barely look at my Garmin, locked into my pace. I feel something tap my right foot and realize my shoelace has come loose. *Blast!* Pause to retie it, tighten the other one, ease back into the stream of runners, find my pace again. John McCarthy passes me, says he is having a rough race. I hope aloud that he settles in. We both keep moving. Halfway point. Pulaski Bridge. Two bridges, two boroughs down. Check. I think I hear someone call my name but don’t know who it could be. (Find out later it is Renee Lucas in Long Island City!) Queens keeps up its part of the bargain; delivers me to the 59th Street Bridge.

The 59th Street Bridge. I try to take a deep breath and exhale slowly, then another. I focus almost exclusively on my posture. *Spine long and tall, shoulders low and loose, hips pressing forward*, it’s almost a chant. I straighten my hands like Tony Gonzalez showed me and use my arms like Glen Shane told me. I do not look around or too far ahead. Runners climb the ledge on the south side of the bridge to take photos; I mentally roll my eyes. Someone is curled in a fetal position on the ledge, tended by volunteers and other runners. A four-wheeler with flashing lights cuts through the course toward me. I see numbered cards along the bridge and am annoyed, *what are they for?* I sing “Feelin’ Groovy” in my head and picture Stephany Evans laughing about it with me. I breathe. I reach the crest. And there is Beni Veraz, running smoothly to my left. I yell a greeting, he acknowledges with a wave, and he is gone. I spiral down into Manhattan. Three bridges, three boroughs done. Check.

1st Avenue is sticky. For several meters after every fluid station, the street slurps at my shoes and I am annoyed. A camera man riding backwards on a four-wheeler is dogging me. Several times he passes me, then falls back. Other runners cut across me to hog camera time. I grumble, remind myself I am having fun, force a smile. I move farther to the left, high-five little kids, feel better. I count up the blocks to 110th Street, start looking for my family again. They somehow do not see me coming until I touch their hands. They are surprised I am there, and I wonder why, shoot them a questioning look and run on.

I reach the Willis Avenue Bridge. A runner next to me glances over and says, "I've been dreading this part." I think he wants me to commiserate but I grin like a maniac and respond, "Not me, I've been looking forward to this for 20 miles!" He looks like he wants to hit me but I keep smiling into the Bronx. Four bridges, four boroughs (not counting the return to Manhattan). Check. I barely contain my excitement at the prospect of 138th St, where I know VCTC awaits. I am counting on the team to push me through the next miles. I zig-zag through the Bronx blocks, make a left and hear my name—it is Bill Smith, a few blocks ahead of the rest of the team! I feel great, lighter than air, smiling non-stop. I make the last turn onto 138th Street and spot the purple banner! I made it! This is basically my fuel stop: I soak up all the energy and power-boosting high-fives I can get. There must be dozens of Vannies cheering, a foot, a banana, a hot dog, a crazy hat and a blinding amount of purple. Friendly faces and encouraging words buoy me over the (last) bridge, and I leave the Bronx behind. Five bridges, five boroughs. Check.

It is time to make the donuts. I find a running lane on 5th Avenue and my pace. Skirt around Marcus Garvey Park. People keep shouting at "Lola" who must be running near me. I am annoyed and try to identify Lola so I can get away from her. *Quit wasting energy*, I scold myself and focus on my next target of 110th Street, my last family contact point. Suddenly, Miles Moloney is in front of me, walking. I catch him, ask if he is ok. He is in pain and plans to walk in. I encourage him to run with me, as my pace is much slower than his normal speed. He joins me for a while then drops back, tells me to go ahead. At 110th Street, I see my people and wave like an idiot, so happy to see them. A final shot of morale. I turn my attention to my objective: the finish line.

5th Avenue is a beast. I climb. My legs fill with cement. Time stops. I see hundreds of runners' backs in an endless ascent ahead of me. I stare at the same tree, inching towards me, for what seems like minutes to convince myself I am not running in place. Around me people start walking, and I am demoralized. I need them to stay in this with me. I glance at my Garmin and am further disheartened at my pace. I feel pathetic but I do not walk. I relive in my mind some of my toughest training moments. I gobble the last of my energy snacks. I think of the other runners who are also struggling through. I think of those who are already finished. I think of how close I am to finishing. I try to summon some of the energy I felt mere minutes ago. I breathe and think about my posture, *spine long and tall, shoulders low and loose, hips pressing forward*. Miraculously, 90th Street materializes, I duck into Central Park. *I know this park*, I remind myself how many times I have run this exact stretch. *Less than 5k*, I promise my legs. Breathe, posture, breathe, posture. I relax, clear some space in my mind. I run faster. Mile marker 25. I feel a hint of exultation, *I am so close now*. I do not let this thought fill my head. Out on Central Park South, I pick up my pace a little more. I breathe. "You can do this," I whisper to myself, "Just. Keep. Going." Central Park South is longer than I remember. Then, Columbus Circle. Time returns to normal speed, then warp speed. I am missing my own marathon finish. I take a deep breath and force my wandering mind back into my exhausted body. Mile marker 26. I push forward, up the rise, and I see the finish. It is enormous and I am entranced. My heart floats up into my throat, glowing, and I ride my elation across the finish line, smiling and shouting, "Yes!"

My head buzzes; the post-finish area is a hive of noise and activity. Someone hands me a medal. I wish she had placed it around my neck instead, then do so myself. Volunteers direct us forward. I feel hollow. Someone wraps me in a heat sheet and tapes it closed. Someone else thrusts a bag into my hand. It contains a chocolate protein drink and I instantly want it more than I have ever wanted anything but I can't open it because my hands do not work. I use my teeth and finally succeed in pouring the whole thing down my

throat. I shuffle along in a crowd of foil-wrapped runners. I feel completely empty and fight back tears. I realize my left leg does not bend anymore. *Huh*, this neither surprises nor interests me. I am cold. Medical staff wearing shirts that read “Spotter” watch us carefully. A volunteer tells us, “Ponchos are three blocks away,” and I echo “Three blocks?!” in dismay. Someone chuckles. I am very cold and very slow. A slew of volunteers ahead, loaded with blue ponchos. Someone swaddles me in one, Velcros it across my shoulder and pulls the hood snugly around my head. I am warm and very appreciative. We trudge down Central Park West, a troop of blue-caped refugees. *Smurf-ugees*, I almost giggle. I want to let someone else in on my joke but cannot form words. Finally, we reach the exit, and the flood of *Smurf-ugees* disperses out into the streets.

I will hobble a few more blocks to meet my family and get some warm clothes. They will hug me and I will not feel like crying anymore. We will trek back to the car, stop at Bronx Ale House for more hugs, then home. I will hang my medal on a shelf. I will take a hot shower, drink a cold beer or three, devour some pizza. I will tell them about the race; they will tell me about the race. I will fall into bed but not sleep. I will never forget this race day.#

My NYRR 66.4K

by *Stephany Evans*

I was on the fence some months ago when Sal “Running Man” Carretta first asked me if I planned to run the NYRR 60K this year. I knew Sal was doing it and I’d enjoyed running bandit with him in a Central Park marathon in February as a long run getting ready for my marathon in Spain at the end of March – though that day I barely hung on for 21 miles and was glad I wasn’t officially entered in the race. But now, in the fall, with several long races under my belt and a full year of training with the VCTC coaches – plus Tony Gonzalez’s Yonkers hill work – I was feeling more ready to take on the 60K again. I had my first 50-miler on the calendar for January 2015 and it would be good to do a longer confidence-building race before that.

Besides, Sal, Manlio Mondo, and Juliene Bell-Smith would be out there running and a number of other teammates were volunteered to cheer along the course, so I got myself signed up. As added incentive, Carolyn Hehir posted on *Facebook* that there was no Women’s 55-59 60K club record, so I could set a bar – I wanted to make the bar VCTC-worthy.

The day dawned pretty chilly after we’d been enjoying some

warmer temps, but I figured it wouldn’t be too bad if I kept moving. When I picked up my number and dropped my bag at the baggage-check, I first saw Chris Urena volunteering at the start and then saw a purple singlet and went to introduce myself to another VCTCer I hadn’t met before – Lanny Levit. Soon after, I saw Sal and Manlio and a couple other friends – Paula from Nike RunNYC and Keila Merino from West Side Y, who crewed *Badwater* with us on Pam Reed’s team two years ago. Keila is an accomplished ultrarunner – she did the Grand Slam this past summer – and she was hoping to break the course women’s record that day. I knew Juliene was registered for the race, but didn’t see her until the race had begun and we jogged out – fairly lackadaisically – for the first mile before starting our nine center loops of the park. It wasn’t until after we’d hit the turn around on the first mile that I saw Juliene running out. Looked like she’d gotten a late start, but she wasn’t too far back and I figured at some point in the next few hours she’d be passing me on the course.

It was fun running along with Manlio and Sal – Manlio was wearing bells “in honor of Fred Lebow” so it was a bit like running alongside a Christmas sleigh – quite jolly! But after a couple of miles Manlio and Sal were discussing their proposed

pace and deciding to keep things a bit above a 10-minute mile. When I'd done this race the first time in 2011 I'd finished in 6:19 with a pace of 10:12. That day I'd stupidly swapped out my usual Nike *Frees* for a "sturdier" pair of shoes that were digging painful trenches in my heels, so I'd always thought I could have done a bit better. I wanted to pace myself at slightly under a 10-minute mile, so told the guys I was going to press on. I dialed the pace up just a notch and let myself drift easily forward trying not to blow my race by going too fast at the start.

Sports watches hate me – they never last through a long race (during the NYC marathon my brand new TomTom had gone completely black at mile 12.2, for example) so I didn't even bother with a watch that day. I just kept an eye on the clock as I completed each lap. At the end of the third lap, about 13 miles, the clock read 1:55 and at that point I decided just to add 40 minutes each time I went around and then would hope to keep my pace to where I'd see that number or just under when I crossed the next time. I was feeling pretty good – Carolyn Hehir was stationed in the west 90s so, 2 miles to Carolyn, 2 miles to the lap mat at Engineer's Gate kept things nicely broken up, and for the next few laps I was under my 40-minute additions by a couple of minutes each time. Somewhere

around my fifth lap I passed Manlio and a bit after that I passed Sal and then I was joined by John Rau who'd come out to keep all of us strong through the later laps of the race. John started asking me about my times and seemed to think I'd done the beginning too fast even though I'd felt super comfortable and had never pushed it at any point. As we started trying to do the math together he thought I must have a sub-four hour marathon, which didn't seem possible to me as I was really too comfortable for that! I started getting nervous about my math but was pretty sure about my laps, but just to be positive when I finished my 7th lap I asked the time keepers how many more laps I had. The answer came back, three.

What? Three? Not possible. *Really?* I asked, "Are you sure?" They looked again and confirmed. OK. That totally took the wind out of my previously ebullient sails. I thought I'd been having a terrific run, but now it was clear I was delusional. I still could hardly believe that I'd miscounted, but they insisted. I stood there drinking water, knowing I had to just suck it up but finding it hard to make myself move again. Another volunteer offered to go and "triple check" but was taking a while to come back to us when John, more coherent than I was, said, "You're wasting time. Just GO. I'll find out what's going on

and I'll catch up to you." So I went.

I tried to pick up my pace again to recover the lost time since I felt hopeful that it would turn out there'd been an error. When I got over to the west side, John had crossed the park on the bridle path and started running along with me again. "Look," he said. "I'd love nothing better than to tell you they made a mistake but they've triple checked and you have three more laps. Well, two and a half now." (My expletive deleted!) I was seriously disappointed. It was clear that instead of doing better this year I was going to do significantly worse than the first time I'd run the 60K.

On the next lap John went to keep Manlio company, and Carolyn, now done with her volunteer gig, ran with me. My attitude was rotten and I actually suggested that Carolyn and John both go run with Manlio and Sal, but Carolyn stuck to me like a burr – I know I was awful company so really appreciated that later! I'd had to pee for a good many miles and had planned NOT TO STOP, but now with six more miles instead of two, and an already lousy time, I took a time out at the porta-potty. When I came out Carolyn told me that Sal had un-lapped himself and was now just ahead of me on the course. John came back, bringing the news that when Manlio had last crossed the

mats he'd been told that he had two more laps to do. Which was impossible as I was also on my last two – according to their calculations – and had lapped Manlio earlier.

Ay-yi-yi! Three years ago when I'd done this race they had told me I had one more lap – and when I'd completed that one they'd said, oh, actually, *now* you have one more lap. All I could think was, *are they doing the same thing to Manlio this year that they did to me then?* After all, they triple-checked my laps so they must be wrong about his. Needless to say, my mind was reeling. What was going on??? By now I was definitely tiring. Hips were getting tight and calf muscles were starting to seize a bit. I really wanted to be done. But... one more lap to go. Carolyn went to run with Sal, and John joined me for my last. He pointed to the clock as we started out, saying, "Remember that number – that might be your real time." I saw the clock read 5:58-something, a time I'd have been happy to call my own. But by then I was so confused, I figured John was just trying to keep me motivated.

As we approached the 72nd Street transverse, I caught sight of Sal for the first time since he'd gotten by me again. I thought it could be nice to catch up with him and maybe cross the mat together but when Sal saw me he took off like his pants were on

fire – there was no way I could catch him. I looked at John and said, "Please tell me that he can't run like that for six miles." John said, "Nah. He's *kicking. He's finishing!*"

Seeing Sal run like that I felt a little spark of hope awaken in me. If they had told Manlio he only had two laps – and I'd lapped him – and if Sal thought this was his last lap when I knew I had almost 4 miles on him, then they MUST have miscounted my laps. Still – they'd checked mine three times. ARG!!! I said to John, "OK, the thing I want most in the world right now is when I cross the mat this time, I want to see Sal, partying; finished. That's what I'm looking for. Then I'll know I did an extra lap."

When I crossed the mat, there was Sal.... *I'd run 41 miles.* We then noticed there was a small electronic board marking the number of laps for each runner. Next to my number it showed that I was on lap number 11. I don't know whether the board was there the whole time or had been recently set up and turned on. For the life of me I can't comprehend why it would not have been referred to when the time-keepers were triple checking my lap count. I was frankly too tired to ask. I think Manlio was more upset than I was – he gave the time-keepers an earful: Hey!! You guys messed up!! You made my friend run an extra lap!!! I think they

may have been a little afraid of the crazy guy who'd just run 37 miles wearing jingle bells. John and I had already lodged our request for a correction with an official looking guy making notes on a clipboard and he'd told us he'd take care of the problem, so I told Manlio we felt things were under control and he didn't need to terrorize them further.

All the drama aside, I was really happy with my time: 5:58:51; 9:39 pace. I PRed by over 20 minutes and placed first in my age group. With an enormous thanks to John and Carolyn and all the cheerers along the way – Alison and Paulina Nunez on bike patrol - all the purple singlets finished well that chilly day. My friend Keila missed her goal of breaking the course record, but finished 2nd woman overall (she was beaten by a 19-year-old Dashing Whippet) and beat my time by an hour and a minute. Given that I'm almost a quarter century older than she, I don't feel too bad about that. #

RENEW,
RENEW; THE
NEW YEAR
IS COMING

Indy Race Report

by Kyle Hall

"I will not allow my mind to be distracted by thoughts of the future, anticipations, hopes, or fears, nor will I let my mind stray toward memories of the past. I will remain focused on this present moment." The Dalai Lama's words in *An Open Heart* help calm me as I visualize myself converging within the asphalt road before me. Wind gusts of twenty miles an hour and wind chill of sub-20 degrees do not deter me. I race forward. This is my day. This is my time. This is the present moment.

On this day, November 1st, I find myself exploring a variety of locales within and near downtown Indianapolis: Lucas Oil Stadium; the giant Civil War monument—namesake for the race; the hip Broad Ripple neighborhood; tree-lined streets. We began just in front of the Indiana capitol building's dome and will finish in the same location. The great thing is that I do not find myself urgently needing to finish. I am living within this race and everything is good.

I cannot lie; there are thoughts within the back of my mind—in places I dare not tread at the present time—regarding how I raced less this year than last and the times I've been running have not been as fast as

in 2013. I did have a break out marathon in Houston in January (5 minutes faster than my previous best) and have had lots of great training weeks since then, but from June to the present, my focus has been more on building mileage than on speed work. Well, I've been hoping that a "Lydiardesque" focus on mileage will eventually translate into fast times. And I've had some great track and tempo workouts in the past month, just in time for my pre-Indy taper. So, now is my time to execute the plan.

The first mile clock reads "5:45." I am right on pace, if not a couple seconds faster than planned. My goal is to average 5:42 which would put me at about 1:14:45 for the 21 kilometer distance. I am a bit off for a couple of miles after that but within about ten seconds of my goal splits. I am comfortable with this. Having run about twenty half marathons, I know that a relaxed first couple miles will lead to a strong, fast finish for a well-trained runner.

At the 10k mark I'm at 35:38. Just a bit off my goal time. I've also been running into a stiff headwind at times, but it hasn't been nearly as bad as folks were warning about last night at the Expo. Interestingly, I'm colder now than I was earlier. In fact, my face is freezing. Normally, I'd be burning but I guess the wind chill really is pretty low this

morning. The great thing is that I'm not needing to take in much fluid. I've already missed the coconut water handoff from my mom just before mile 3 and dropped a cup from a volunteer after that. But I've trained on most long runs with little-to-no fluid intake and I'm feeling really good.

I'm in 47th place at the 10k mark (although I didn't have any idea at the time what place I was in), and am steadily picking people off. Around mile 7, we split off from the marathon course and begin our journey back towards downtown. I'm gaining on a woman with a very sturdy looking build and unrelenting stride. As I pull up with her I say: "Keep it up. You're going to make the Trials." I figure she's one of the sub-elites in the race attempting to run 1:15 or faster. This race is loaded with talent and she is strong. She doesn't respond, though, and I'm quickly past her.

At the 10 mile mark, the clock reads "57:04." I figure I got to the line about two seconds after the non-existent gun start; so about 57:02. Way faster than my 58:30 in the Bronx a little over a month ago...and I'm cruising. My breathing is a bit rapid but I wouldn't say labored. My legs feel solid. All the little aches and pains of the past couple weeks have dissipated somehow from last night to now. I have no watch and haven't even

checked the splits written on my left arm in black Sharpie ink. I am one with the road. I am the course. I set my sights on a guy in the distance and continue moving forward.

By mile 12, I figure I'm on target for my goal time. I may even run 1:14:30. I'm so excited that I pull up on this guy with a shaved head who's representing a Nashville team and then blow past him. At that moment, we're crossing a small bridge over the White River and my parents are cheering me on from the windswept sidewalk. "Go, Kyle! You've got it but you *have to go now!*" I think there's another half mile left of looping around the Statehouse. But suddenly this is the final turn and, what?!, there's the finish line! Crap! I kick in a bit more and veer around some young folks in neon green shirts finishing up their 5k race.

I figure the 1:14's in the books until I look up to the official finish clock and see "1:15:24." My heart drops a bit as I cross the line. "How in the -----?" Somehow, somewhere, in some way, the course clocks were not in sync with the official clock. Blame it. My 10 mile split, for example, must've actually been about 57:35 or so. I'm feeling strong, though, and am only 3 seconds off my best ever half, run last year. And 5 seconds faster than my best at 22 years of age (in October of 2000). I am

happy but a bit jarred by the slap to the face the finish clock's just given me. Soon, this doesn't even matter much as I feel like I'm going into hypothermia if I don't get my sweatshirt from my parents.

Ten minutes or so pass before I find them. Thankfully, I get a nice new hat in the finish area along with my medal. My mom then attaches two foil heat blankets around my upper and lower extremities and I'm soon walking around with my new cape and a dress.

Once back in the Hilton, I warm up again by the fireplace in the lobby, as I had during pre-race stretching, and my "pops" then looks up the race results when we're back in the room. Turns out I was 42nd overall and 5th in my age group within a race that sent four women and two men to the next Olympic Marathon Trials. I'm thankful and pleased to find that my collection of 80 mile weeks since July has indeed translated into a hybrid of strength-speed capable of lifting me to within sight of a new p.r. Now, it's back to the grindstone as I prepare to run the 1:14 in Houston on January 18th...#

Race Results

New York City Marathon Nov 3, 2014

Marcos Duarte- 2:47.24, PR by 6:07
 Sean Dunne- 2:55.04. PR by 6:26
 Kevin Shelton-Smith- 2:57.06
 John Peliccia- 3:04.06
 Ninji Harris- 3:17.53
 Bradford King- 3:18.37
 Patrick Bernal- 3:22.10
 Staurt Kelso- 3:23.34
 Sean Moore- 3:25.56
 Juliene Bell-Smith- 3:27.00
 Alison Whitehead- 3:32.16
 Grant Titre- 3:32.40
 Deborah Heelan- 3:36.20, 9th AG !
 Paulina Nunez- 3:40.12
 Bette Clark- 3:42.07
 Beni Veraz- 3:43.08
 David Isaac- 3:45.32
 Tony Ambriano- 3:48.23
 Andrea Washam- 3:49.00
 Gerard Chamorin- 3:51.12
 John Farrelly- 3:52.22
 Damian Mackle- 3:54.48
 Ciara Malone- 3:54.49
 Damion Pelotte- 3:56.03
 Rob Vassilarakis- 3:57.21, PR by 4:11
 Stephany Evans- 3:57.25
 Penelope Sheely- 4:08.19, PR by 11:48
 Dennis Martinez- 4:08.54
 Monica Harrington- 4:14.03
 Hiroshi Kitada- 4:19.06
 Firdaus Dotiwala- 4:19.30
 Siobhan Neilan- 4:20.39
 Leonardo Vando- 4:22.11, PR by 37:09
 Matthew Newton- 4:22.18
 Paul Swem- 4:22.41
 Manlio Mondo- 4:26.37
 John McCarthy- 4:30.34
 Deborah Mosko- 4:36.48
 Annemarie Petroff- 4:40.33
 Robert Jacklosky- 4:41.31, PR by 9:39

Sal Carretta- 4:42.38
 Wendell Tong- 4:49.23
 Dignangely Jimenez- 4:50.15
 Doug Clayton- 4:50.41
 Kevin Mulvey- 4:50.44
 Matt Post- 4:51.42
 Miles Moloney- 4:53.01
 Emily Rau- 4:53.26
 Tom Long- 4:53.31
 Jasmine Sanchez- 4:56.50
 Leoni Parker- 5:00.56
 Jose Pacheco- 5:05.15
 David Pultz- 5:28.10
 Enrique Jaen- 5:31.08
 Christie Damo- 5:37.57
 Ed James- 5:43.15
 Katie Sullivan- 5:50.16
 Jose Delacruz- 5:58.24
 Taliah Sykes- 5:58.28
 Lanny Levitt- 6:10.10
 Andrea Rafael- 6:13.17
 Vivian Molina- 6:52.33

Philadephia Half/Marathon Nov 23, 2014

Half- Marathon:
 Matt Soja- 1:18.32
 Marcos Duarte/Martinez- 1:28.41
 Harrison Isaac- 1:39.47, PR by 8:11
 David Isaac- 1:39.47
 Michael Dervin- 1:42.09, new guy for VCTC !
 Denny Moran- 1:55.32, PR by 10:34
 Rachel Isaac- 1:57.29, PR by 13:45
 Lorraine Isaac- 2:12.15
 Andrea Rafael- 2:57.05
 Marathon:
 Kevin Shelton-Smith- 2:52.12, 4th AG !
 Laura Rodriguez- 2:58.17, 4th AG, PR by 6:03,
 New VCTC Record, First VCTC Woman ever to
 break 3 hours !!!
 Ely Greenberg- 3:12.55, PR by 57 sec
 Bobby Asher- 3:21.13, thanks Bobby for pacing
 Laura !
 Deirdre Keane- 3:23.47, PR by 1:24, a mere 6
 weeks after BQ in Chicago
 Angelina Roberts- 3:39.40, welcome back !
 Ariel Cruz- 3:55.16, 31 minute PR !!

CLUB NEWS

Membership: *Please renew your membership which is due 1/1/15* (If you haven't already). Membership rates are: single-\$25; family-\$35; junior(under 18)/senior(62+) \$10. New members add \$15 to pay for team singlet; additional singlets cost \$15. Please send checks payable to VCTC to: **VCTC P.O. Box 341, Bronx, N.Y. 10471**. Applications are online at www.vctc.org Please e-mail Rick Bloomer or David King with any changes of address, phone, email and whether you would like to be added to the group email.

Meetings/Workouts: For 2015: Team meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 10 a.m.

Club workouts are Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at the Van Cortlandt Stadium track at 242nd St and Broadway, Thursday evening tempo runs meeting at 7 p.m. at the Tortoise and Hare Statue/X-country finish line, Saturdays at 8 a.m. (we meet at handball courts at 242nd St and Broadway)

Newsletter stories: The newsletter is published bi-monthly. We welcome all contributions. Deadline for the January/February 2015 issue is December 23, 2014. Maximum length is 600 words. Please e-mail kingkvd@optonline.net and/or ogard777@yahoo.com and try to include a photo.

Race times: Remember to send race times to Peter Coy petercoy@verizon.net or 52 Stelfox St., Demarest, N.J. 07627. Please include name of race, date, location, finishing time, your name, age. Optional: place, age-group, personal best.

Website: Visit us on our website: www.vctc.org

Van Cortlandt Track Club

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